

## **William Wheeler Thornton Papers**

L159

1877-1931, undated

3 mss. boxes

Rare Books and Manuscripts Division  
Indiana State Library

Processed by: Christina Baich, November 2005  
Finding aid revised by: Bethany Fiechter, 2015/10/30

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### **Biographical Note:**

William Wheeler Thornton was born on June 27, 1851, near Logansport, Indiana. His parents were John Allen and Ellen Thomas Thornton. He grew up on a farm in Cass County, Indiana, where he attended the local schools and Smithson College, a Universalist educational institution. He studied law at the law firm of his uncle, Henry C. Thornton, before attending the University of Michigan where he received an LL.B. degree in 1876. Thornton then returned to Logansport where he practiced law until 1880. In January 1882, he married Mary F. Grove. Mary died on July 22, 1905. Thornton married nearly six years later on June 20, 1911. His second wife was Irene Blackledge.

Thornton was appointed Indiana Deputy Attorney General by Daniel P. Baldwin in 1880 and served a two year term. He resumed his private law practice in Crawfordsville, Indiana (1883-1889) and then Indianapolis (1893-1914). While in Crawfordsville, Thornton also served as city attorney for two years. On September 1, 1889, he was appointed librarian of the Indiana Supreme Court. He left private practice when he became judge of the Marion County Superior Court in 1914, a post he maintained until 1932. Thornton was also the author of numerous books and articles on the law and was considered one of the most prolific and authoritative writers on the subject. He died on January 21, 1932.

#### *Source:*

Thompson, Donald E., comp. Indiana Authors and their Books, 1917-1966. Crawfordsville, IN: Wabash College, 1974.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The collection contains Thornton's manuscript for a book of political documents, principally from nineteenth century America; his manuscript of a biography of early Indiana jurist Isaac Blackford; articles on the judicial system of Indiana and the Northwest Territory; an essay on French General Michel Ney in America; and correspondence regarding politics and his legal and historical writings (1871-1903).

The collection is organized chronologically by document type.

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## **Box and Folder Listing:**

### Box 1. *Correspondence and Political documents manuscript*

#### Folder

1. Correspondence, 1877-1903
2. Clippings, 1880-1888
3. Political documents manuscript, 1900
4. Political documents manuscript, 1900
5. Political documents manuscript, 1900
6. Political documents manuscript, 1900
7. Political documents manuscript, 1900
8. Political documents manuscript, 1900
9. Political documents manuscript, 1900
10. Political documents manuscript, 1900
11. Political documents manuscript, 1900
12. Political documents manuscript, 1900

### Box 2. *Political documents and Isaac Blackford manuscripts*

#### Folder

1. Political documents manuscript, 1900
2. Political documents manuscript, 1900
3. Political documents manuscript, 1900
4. Political documents manuscript, 1900
5. Political documents manuscript, 1900
6. Political documents manuscript, 1900
7. Isaac Blackford data and notes, undated
8. Isaac Blackford manuscript, 1931
9. Isaac Blackford manuscript, 1931
10. Isaac Blackford manuscript, 1931
11. Isaac Blackford manuscript, 1931
12. Isaac Blackford manuscript, 1931

### Box 3. *Isaac Blackford appendices and other writings*

#### Folder

1. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
2. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
3. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
4. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
5. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
6. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
7. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
8. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
9. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
10. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931

11. Isaac Blackford appendices, 1931
  12. Isaac Blackford essays, undated
  13. Speech, notes and essays, undated
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**Collection Information:**

*Size of Collection:* 3 manuscript boxes  
*Collection Dates:* 1877-1931, undated  
*Provenance:* Mrs. William Wheeler Thornton, 3 June 1938  
*Access:* This collection is open for research.  
*Restrictions:* None  
*Reproduction Rights:* Permission to reproduce, exhibit, or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Manuscript Section, Indiana State Library. Possession of a reproduction from an Indiana State Library collection does not constitute permission for use.  
*Language* Materials are entirely in English  
*Alternate Formats:* None  
*Related Holdings:*  
*Notes:*

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